

Message Text

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AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES
USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 1067

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT AO
SUBJECT: ANGOLAN COALITION GOVERNMENT

1. SOME CONFUSION EXISTS IN AND OUT OF ANGOLA ON THE NATURE
OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED AT THE UN ON DECEMBER 3
BY MINISTER FOR INTERTERRITORIAL COORDINATION ALMEIDA SANTOS.

2. AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF ADMIRAL ROSA COUTINHO IN ANGOLA TO
TAKE UP HIS DUTIES AS PRESIDENT OF THE JUNTA, THE PORTUGUESE
CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT CONSISTING OF
SIX SECRETARIES WITHOUT PORTFOLIO, AND ELEVEN HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.
THE SECRETARIES WITHOUT PORTFOLIO ARE THE SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE
CABINET AND OVERSEE BROAD SECTORS OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY. THREE
OF THE POSTS WITHOUT PORTFOLIO WERE RESERVED FOR THE THREE
LIBERATION GROUPS, BUT THEY REFUSED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
GOVERNMENT.

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3. MEANWHILE, THE PORTUGUESE WENT AHEAD WITH PLANS TO PROMULGATE

A NEW LAW THAT WOULD PROVIDE ANGOLA WITH INTERNAL AUTONOMY, A HIGH COMMISSIONER, A PRIME MINISTER AND A CABINET. AFTER THE LIBERATION GROUPS HAD ALL AGREED TO CEASE FIRES AND THE PORTUGUESE HELD PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS ON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN A COALITION GOVERNMENT, IT BECAME IMMEDIATELY APPARENT THAT THE PRIME MINISTERIAL SYSTEM WOULD NOT WORK AS NONE OF THE GROUPS WANTED TO CEDE THE TOP JOB TO ONE OF THE OTHER MOVEMENTS.

4. BY THE TIME ASSISTANT SECRETARY EASUM VISITED LUANDA, THE PORTUGUESE HAD TURNED TO THE IDEA OF A HYBRID. ADMIRAL ROSA COUTINHO TOLD EASUM HE HAD IN MIND A SYSTEM USING A HIGH COMMISSIONER AND THREE SECRETARIES WITHOUT PORTFOLIO, ONE FOR EACH LIBERATION GROUP. THESE THREE SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE CABINET WOULD HAVE AUTHORITY TO LOOK INTO ANY DEPARTMENT, AND PAPER AND DECISIONS WOULD FLOW THROUGH THEM. THE HOPE WAS THAT EVENTUALLY THEY WOULD LEARN TO WORK IN HARNESS AND A MORE FORMAL ARRANGEMENT FOR A COALITION COULD BE MADE. THE DECREE PUBLISHED IN LISBON ON NOVEMBER 27 EMBODIES THE FOREGOING CONCEPT, WHICH IS AN INTERIM INTERIM ARRANGEMENT.

5. WHATEVER ELSE MIGHT BE SAID OF THE PORTUGUESE EFFORTS TO DATE ON ANGOLAN DECOLONIZATION, THEY NEVER GIVE UP. IF THE LATEST IDEA IS REJECTED, AS SEEMS LIKELY, THEY WILL COME UP WITH ANOTHER. IT IS TOO BAD THAT ALMEIDA SANTOS TALKED PUBLICLY ABOUT THE LATEST IDEA, BECAUSE IT HAS NOT YET BEEN FULLY ACCEPTED BY THE LIBERATION GROUPS. ADMIRAL ROSA COUTINHO TOLD ME DEC 6 THAT HE WAS VERY DISSAPPOINTED TO LEARN OF ALMEIDA SANTOS STATEMENT.

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